

Six Foolish Fishermen



SPINNING
SCHOOL

Six Foolish Fishermen

Based on a folktale in Ashton's

Chap-books of the Eighteenth Century, 1882

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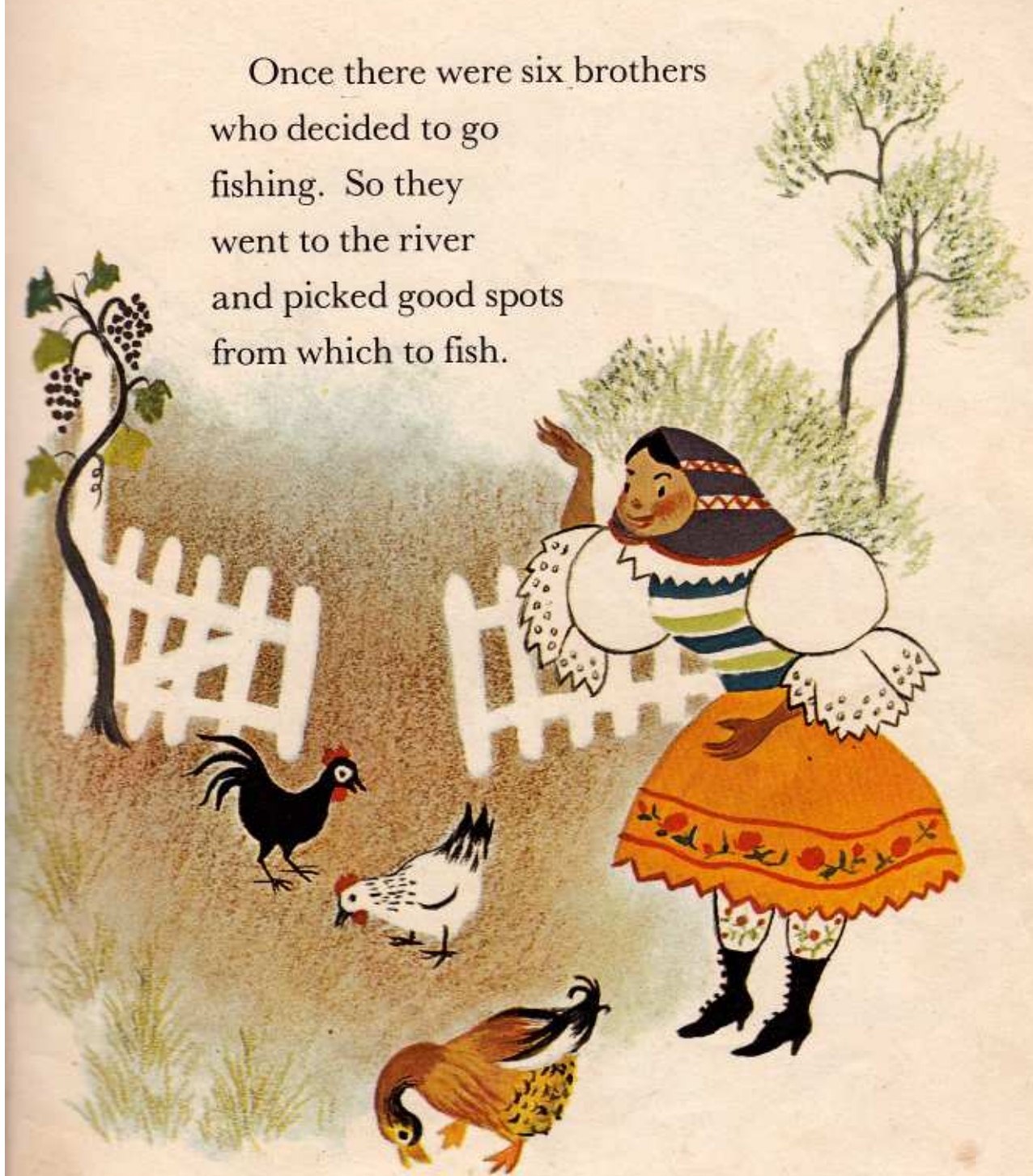
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Once there were six brothers
who decided to go
fishing. So they
went to the river
and picked good spots
from which to fish.



“I will sit in this boat,”
said the first brother.





“And I will kneel on this raft,”
said the second brother.

“And I will lean on this log,”
said the third brother.





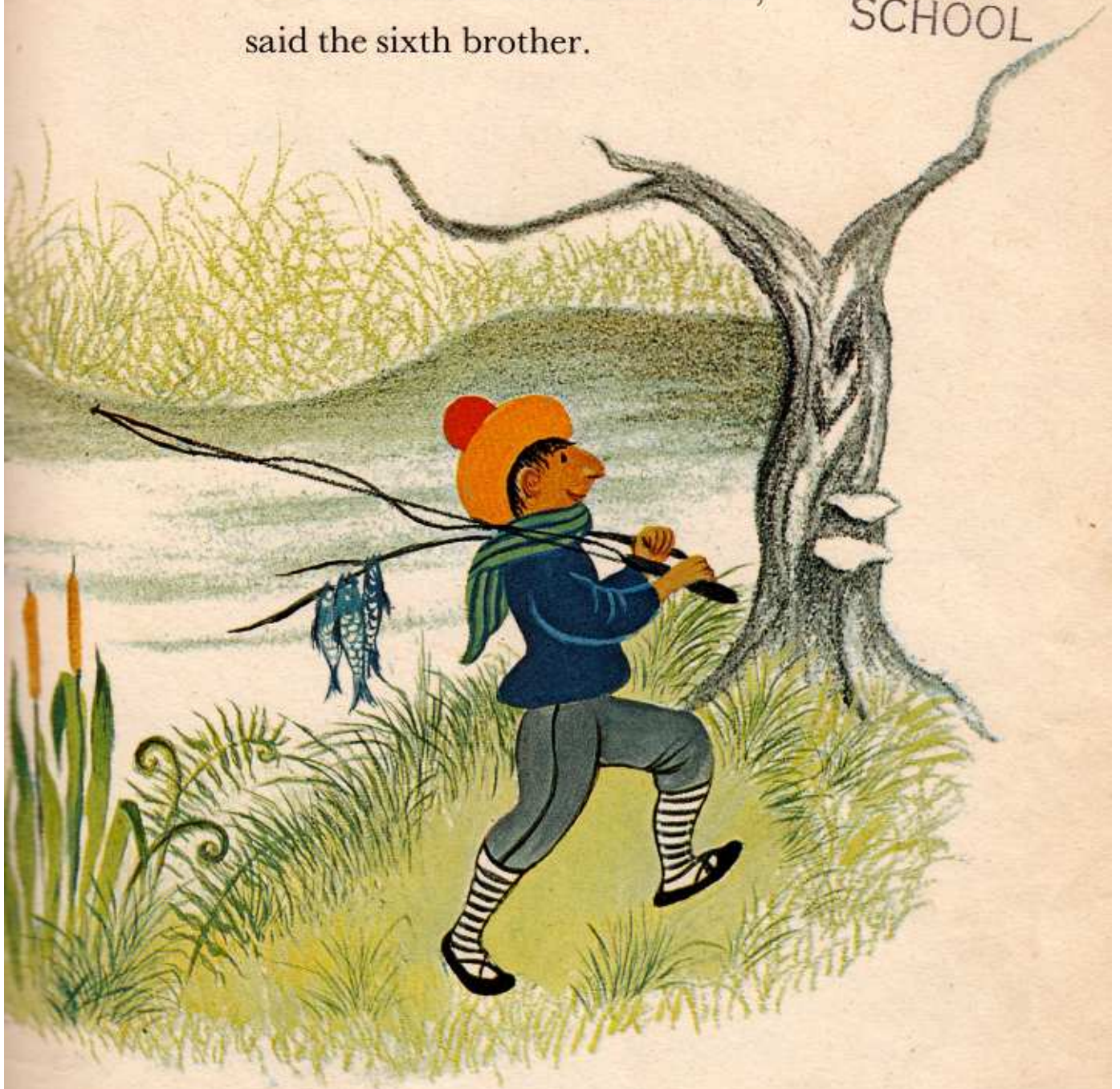
“And I will stand on this
bridge,” said the fourth brother.



“And I will lie on this rock,”
said the fifth brother.

“And I will walk on this bank,”
said the sixth brother.

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And that is exactly what they did.
Each brother fished from the
spot he had chosen, and each one
had good luck.

But when it was time to go home,
the brothers became a little
worried.

“We have been near the river,
and over the river, and on the
river,” said the brother in
the boat. “One of us might
easily have fallen into the water
and been drowned. I shall count
all the brothers to be sure there
are six of us.”

And he began to count:



"I see one
brother on the raft,
That's *one*.



And another
on the log.
That's *two*.



And another
on the bridge.
That's *three*.



And another
on the rock.
That's *four*.



And another
on the bank.
That's *five*.



"Only *five*! Woe is me. We have
lost a brother!" In his sorrow he
didn't even notice that he had
forgotten to count himself.

“Can it really be?” cried the
brother on the raft. “Has one
of us been drowned, and have we
really lost a brother?”

And he, too, began to count:







"I see one
brother on
the log.
That's *one*."

And another
on the bridge.
That's *two*.



And another
on the rock.
That's *three*.



And another
on the bank.
That's *four*.



And another
in the boat.
That's *five*.

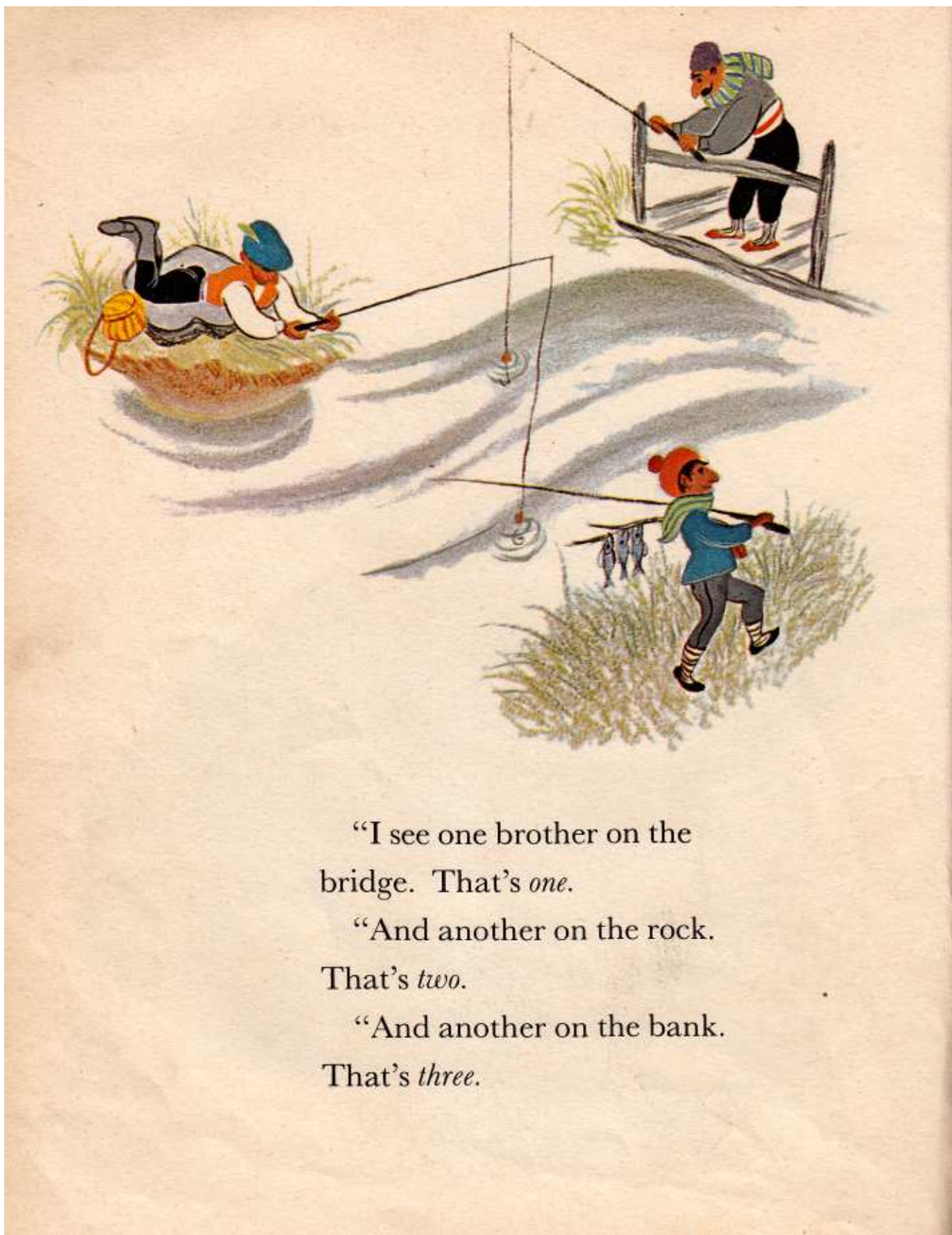
“Only *five*. What will our dear mother say?”

And he, too, didn't even notice that he had forgotten to count himself.



“Let me check from here!”
cried the brother
on the log.





“I see one brother on the
bridge. That’s *one*.

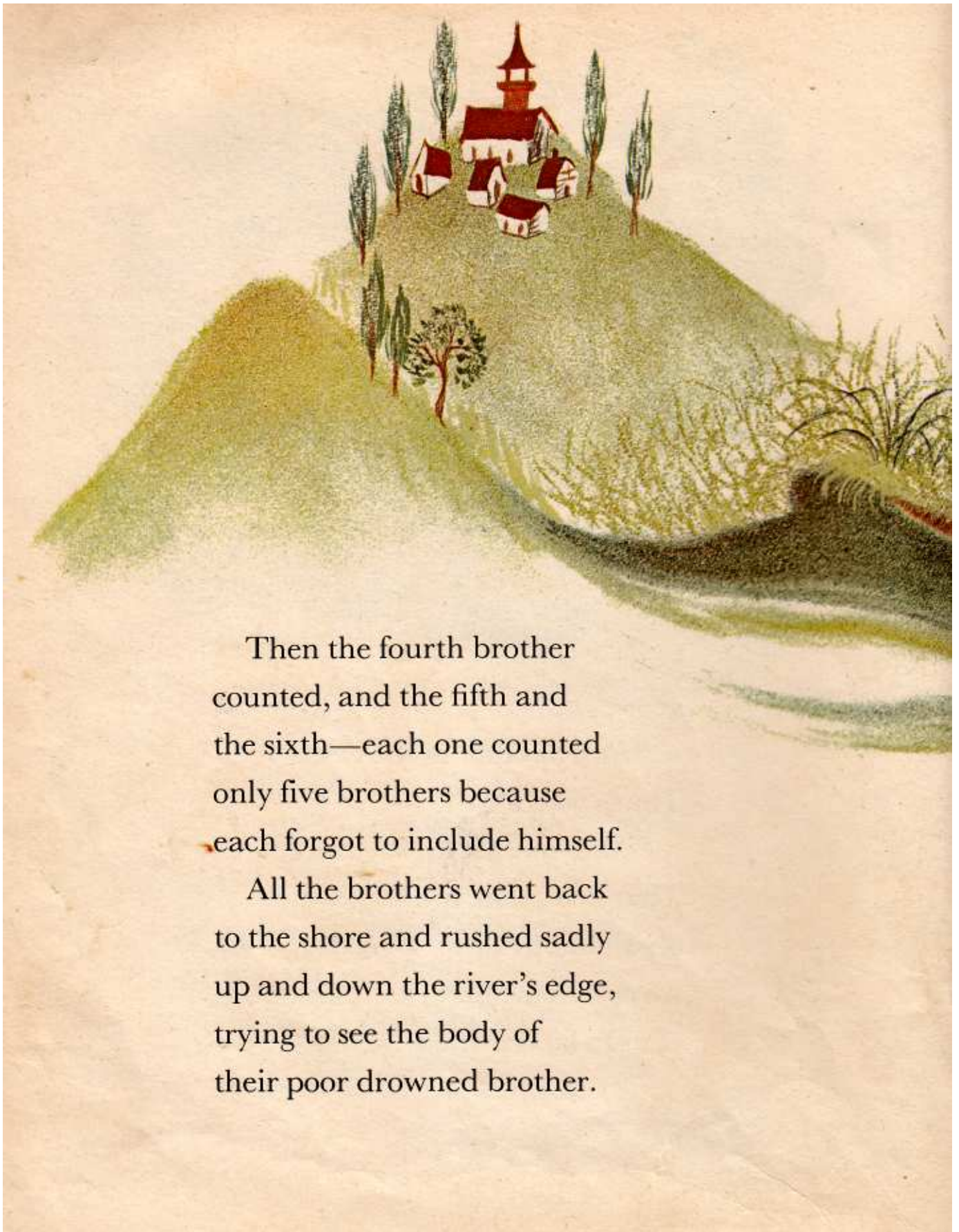
“And another on the rock.
That’s *two*.

“And another on the bank.
That’s *three*.



“And another in the boat.
That’s *four*.

“And another on the raft.
That’s *five*. *Five* in all,
oh, unhappy day! Why did
we ever come here, for one
of us to be drowned!”



Then the fourth brother counted, and the fifth and the sixth—each one counted only five brothers because each forgot to include himself.

All the brothers went back to the shore and rushed sadly up and down the river's edge, trying to see the body of their poor drowned brother.



Then along came a boy who had also been fishing, but who had not caught a single fish.

“What’s the matter?” he asked. “You seem to have plenty of fish. Why do you all look so sad?”

“Because six of us came here to fish, and now there are only five of us left. One of our dear brothers has been drowned!”

The boy looked puzzled. “What do you mean, only five left? How do you figure that?”





“Look, I’ll show you,” said
the eldest brother, and he
pointed to his brothers:

“One.

Two.

Three.

Four.

Five.

“Six of us came here, and now
only five are going back. Sad
is the day!”

The boy turned to hide his smile,
and then he turned back. “I think
I can help you find your lost
brother,” he said. “When I squeeze
your hand, I want you to count.”

As hard as he could, he squeezed
the hand of each of the brothers,
in turn.

"One!" yelled the first brother,
and he rubbed his aching hand.

"Two!" cried the second brother,
and he jumped up and down because
of the hard squeeze.

"Three!" shouted the third brother.

"Four!" shrieked the fourth brother.

"Five!" screamed the fifth brother.

"Six!" roared the sixth brother.

SIX! The brothers looked at
each other in delight.





There were six of them again!
They cheered for joy, and
slapped each other on the back.
Gratefully, they turned to the
boy. "Here," they said, "We
insist that you take all of our
fish. We can never thank you
enough for finding our dear,
lost brother."

As the boy happily accepted
their gift, the six foolish
fisherman went their merry way.

